

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 01270 171230Z
ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1270

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: OVIP, SP (SUAREZ, ADOLFO)
SUBJECT: VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ TO WASHINGTON

1. I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER OREJA EVENING OF
FEBRUARY 16 AT HIS REQUEST. HE SAID THAT HE WANTED
AGAIN TO TALK ABOUT THE VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ
TO THE UNITED STATES. IT HAD BEEN HIS UNDERSTANDING
FOLLOWING CONVERSATIONS WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OSORIO
HAD HAD IN WASHINGTON THAT SOME DECISION WOULD HAVE BEEN
REACHED BY NOW CONCERNING SUCH A VISIT. OREJA SAID
THAT, WITH THE VARIOUS FOREIGN VISITS WHICH THE KING AND
HE HAD RECENTLY MADE, THE MANY FOREIGN VISITORS COMING
TO MADRID, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH ALL THE
EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, AND WITH THE NUMEROUS FOREIGN
VISITS BEING PLANNED OVER THE NEXT TWO MONTHS BY THE
KING AND HIMSELF (SEE SEPTTEL), THE ABSENCE OF ANY
OFFICIAL SPANISH VISIT TO THE US WOULD MAKE IT APPEAR
TO PUBLIC OPINION THAT IN SOME WAY THE RELATIONS BETWEEN
THE US AND SPAIN HAD BEEN DOWNGRADED. OREJA SAID THIS
WAS OBVIOUSLY AN ERRONEOUS CONCLUSION SINCE THE RELATIONS
BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE EXCELLENT AND CONTACTS ARE
CONSTANT AT VARIOUS LEVELS, INCLUDING THE RECENT MEETING
OF THE SPANISH-US COUNCIL AT THE PERMREP LEVEL. HOWEVER,
THE FACT REMAINED THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO HIGH LEVEL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MADRID 01270 171230Z

MEETING BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESIDENT CARTER AND
THE GOS.

2. OREJA EMPHASIZED THAT THE GOS CONTINUED TO BELIEVE
THAT A WORKING VISIT OF THE PRIME MINISTER FOR A DAY OR
SO TO WASHINGTON TO MEET WITH THE PRESIDENT AND TO HAVE
OTHER CONTACTS WITH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AND THE

CONGRESS WAS MOST IMPORTANT TO UNDERLINE THE CLOSENESS OF US-SPANISH RELATIONS, HE AGAIN URGED THAT THE PRESIDENT AGREE TO RECEIVE THE PRIME MINISTER IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

3. OREJA SAID IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO WASHINGTON FOR PLANNING PURPOSES TO KNOW WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST CONVENIENT DATES FOR SUAREZ. THESE WOULD BE (A) ANY TIME IN THE PERIOD MARCH 9 THROUGH 18, (ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZED THIS WAS A VERY SHORT LEADTIME), OR (B) ANY TIME IN THE PERIOD APRIL 10 THROUGH 16.

4. I TOLD OREJA THAT I WOULD IMMEDIATELY REPORT OUR CONVERSATION TO WASHINGTON AND HOPED THAT I MIGHT HAVE AN ANSWER FOR HIM IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

5. COMMENT. IT IS TRUE THAT THE MANY FOREIGN VISITS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE AND WHICH ARE PLANNED, PLUS THE CONSTANT FLOW INTO MADRID OF HIGH LEVEL FOREIGN VISITORS, PLUS THE RECENT ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, AND ALL OF THIS WITHOUT ANY US CONNECTION, CREATES A PUBLIC IMAGE OF LACK OF HIGH-LEVEL CONTACT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND SPAIN, AND THEREFORE THE IDEA THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE US HAVE BEEN RELEGATED TO A SECONDARY ROLE. I HAVE INDICATED BEFORE, AND WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE, MY VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL FOR THE US TO RESTATE PUBLICLY AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OUR SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION IN SPAIN. OBVIOUSLY A VISIT BY SUAREZ TO WASHINGTON WOULD PROVIDE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MADRID 01270 171230Z

AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCH A STATEMENT. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE CLOSE TIES WE HAVE WITH SPAIN AND OUR DESIRE TO MAINTAIN THESE TIES, WITH THE FRAMEWORK OF SPAIN'S SEARCH FOR A MORE ACTIVE FOREIGN POLICY IN OTHER AREAS, FULLY JUSTIFY A VISIT AT THIS TIME BY THE PRIME MINISTER.

6. I RECOGNIZE THAT SPAIN IS BUT ONE OF MANY COUNTRIES THAT WOULD LIKE TO SEND ITS LEADERS TO MEET WITH THE PRESIDENT AND THAT THERE ARE GREAT DIFFICULTIES OF SCHEDULING. I WOULD URGE, HOWEVER, THAT IF AT ALL POSSIBLE WE AGREE TO A VISIT BY PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ IN APRIL. IN ANY EVENT I DO THINK THAT WE SHOULD GIVE THE GOS WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY A SPECIFIC INDICATION OF WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE. IT IS AWKWARD TO KEEP THIS QUESTION IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION. STABLER

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